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United States Department of Agriculture
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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

DIGEST OF HOMEMAKERS' CHATS

Week of September 7, 1942

(To be remimeographed for distribution to Home demonstration agents)

Monday - Farm Family Teamwork. This year Labor Day, September 7, 1942, has been dedicated to an inspiring war theme - Free Labor Will Win. This theme contrasts the free voluntary labor in America with slave labor in the Axis nations. This includes not just the men and women engaged in producing tanks and guns and planes and other implements of war, but the old men, women, girls, and children who are filling in on farms where the hired man or older brothers have gone into the armed forces or taken other war jobs. Farm women and girls are taking over the regular farm work and outside farm chores and adding it to the jobs they have always done. They are riding tractors and other farm machinery in the fields, planting and harvesting crops, caring for livestock, milking cows, and taking produce to market. If you would like some ideas on organizing your family for wartime farm work, write to the U. S. Department of Agriculture and ask for publication No. 492, "War and Farm Work."

Tuesday - The National Food Picture. The question for today is "What is the food situation going to be in this country during the coming months?" Figures show that the United States is producing more food than ever before, but the demand for food is greater than ever before. Food needs for Lend-Lease and for our own armed forces have increased since spring, and civilians are eating more because they have money to buy more food. Predictions now are that the plentiful foods will be: Cereal or grain foods, lamb and mutton, poultry, dairy products, and most fresh vegetables. Not so plentiful foods will be sugar, canned foods, beef, pork, and possibly lard. There may be as much fat and oil in food as in 1941 because growers of peanuts, soybeans, and flaxseed are coming through with enormous crops to supply our need for fats and oils. Supplies of cheese and evaporated milk are so large you will be helping the country by using more of them. This is because large supplies were built up for Lend-Lease shipment; then the shipping situation changed so that emphasis now is on shipping dried skim milk. Cannerymen are putting up record-breaking packs of vegetables but a great part of this will go to the armed forces. Home canning and other kinds of preservation will have to make up for the cut in commercial supplies.

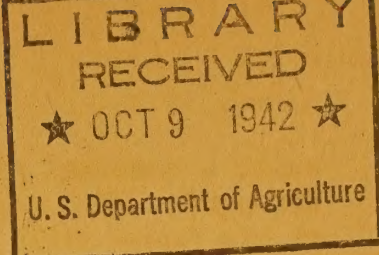
Wednesday - Longer Life for Little Accessories. Here are a few suggestions on how to make accessories like gloves, handbag and umbrella last. Sew a name tape on the inside of each glove and paste them in galoshes and umbrellas. When selecting gloves, see that they fit well. Put them on the way the salesperson tries gloves on you. Take them off carefully, pull them gently into shape, blow into the fingers, and lay them in tissue paper in a flat box. Don't let them get too dirty before cleaning. Save special cleaning directions that come with them. Never try to wash them unless they are marked "washable." Wash gloves on the hands except for chamois or doeskin ones. Mend rips promptly, using cotton thread on leather. As for handbags -

don't stuff your bag. Don't let it get wet. Open zippers gently. When putting the bag away, stuff with crumpled tissue paper and wrap in soft cloth. Wrap silver and gold evening bags in black tissue paper to prevent tarnishing. Clean white leather bags like white leather shoes, natural colored bags with saddle soap, patent leather bags with patent cream, suede with a rubber sponge. Art gum sometimes cleans colored leather. A wet umbrella should be left open to prevent mildew and rust. A silk umbrella needs a shower bath once in a while. Clean it with a soft cloth. Clean oil-silk umbrellas by washing them with mild soap and water, rinse off and dry in the shade. Brush off colored cotton umbrellas. Keep the strap buttoned when carrying it closed. Hang the umbrella up in the closet when not in use.

Thursday - Question Box. Many women this week are asking how to make over dresses for fall. You can get some good suggestions on freshening up and making over old clothes by writing to the Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture, or to your State clothing leader in the State extension service. Meantime, here are a few suggestions. Look in pattern books and magazines for ideas and designs to fit the things you have on hand. You can often dye faded material or turn and use it wrong side out. When taking garments apart, pull the threads or rip with a razor blade. Brush off the lint from old seams. Press wool or silk on wrong side with a pressing cloth. Press frequently while making over. Look for weak, worn spots and stains. Plan to cut around or hide them with applique in contrasting color. If you can't find the exact pattern you can pin-fit the new part on the person to be fitted. The neckline can be changed with a fresh collar, jabot, or scarf, made from bits of organdy, linen, pique, and other materials. Often you can combine two dresses, a top from one, a skirt from another, or sleeves, belt, and patch pockets from one dress make colorful trimming for another. And now to go to stews. Many women nowadays are interested in making thrifty meat dishes. The first question is - "How much meat should I buy for a stew to serve 5 or 6 persons." Allow about 2 pounds of lean raw meat without bone for a good all-meat stew for 6 persons. For a stew with vegetables, you can use less meat. And - "How can I get stew gravy to have a rich taste?" The answer is: Flour and then brown the meat in fat before adding water. Next - "Should I start a stew with hot or cold water?" The answer: Either hot or cold water is all right. Add enough to cover and simmer slowly until the meat is tender. Try serving stew in a border of rice or potatoes, or with dumplings; as filling for hot biscuits in meat shortcake; scalloped with spaghetti or macaroni; as meat pie under biscuit or pie crust or mashed potatoes. Another woman wants to know how to cook parsnips. Try boiling them whole, then split them lengthwise, and strip out the tough center. Dip the halves in flour and fry to a golden brown. Or mash parsnips, season, make into little cakes and fry. Or serve them boiled and in a white sauce, or scalloped in a baking dish with thin white sauce and buttered crumbs on top.

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United States Department of Agriculture
EXTENSION SERVICE
Washington, D. C.



DIGEST OF HOMEMAKERS' CHATS

Week of September 14, 1942

(To be remimeographed for distribution to home demonstration agents)

Monday - Dehydrated Foods for Future Homemakers. A new industry is growing up in America and one that will no doubt make amazing changes in the kitchens of the future. The extent of these changes will depend on how far the American homemaker is willing to go in using dehydrated foods. Because the dried-food industry is still in its infancy, practically the entire output is needed for shipment to war zones. Dried foods are playing an important part in helping to win the war. They are lifesavers today to the armed forces and to our civilian allies. Dried foods, of course, are not new. The Chinese and other ancients practiced the art of drying foods; Genghis Khan, back in the Twelfth Century fed his cavalymen a sort of dried cheese; long before Columbus, North American Indians dried corn, pumpkins, and berries, and prepared "jerked" beef for the winter supply. During World War I, dehydrated products were in demand and a few plants were developing. Today dehydration is front-page news. Dehydrated foods occupy one-fourth to one-tenth the shipping space of nondehydrated products, and a similar saving in weight is gained. Concentrated orange juice, dried-egg powder, lemon powder, dried vegetables, dried meats, all these afford civilians and soldiers vitamins they would otherwise have to do without. The new war developments in food will be made to serve American homemakers in the future.

Tuesday - Question Box. The first question today is "How can I get the most food value from potatoes?" Food scientists of the Department give five easy rules: Cook potatoes in their jackets; if you must peel, peel thin and just before cooking; store white potatoes in a cool, dark, airy place where they won't freeze; and store sweetpotatoes in a dry place not too cold. For further information on cooking potatoes, write to the U. S. Department of Agriculture for the new folder, Potatoes in Low-Cost Meals. A second housewife asks: "Can you give me the secret of making good gravy?" The meat cookery scientists say the secret is to blend flour with fat in equal quantity and then add cool or lukewarm liquid gradually while stirring or beating the mixture over low heat. Use 1-1/2 to 2 tablespoons of flour and the same amount of fat for each cup of liquid. For taste use different seasonings, and salt and pepper. To get more color, try browning the flour before you use it to thicken the gravy. Another housewife wants to know how to make grape juice at home which will not have gritty dark sediment in the bottom. Here's the answer: After the juice has been pasteurized, let it stand for 3 to 6 months to allow for crystallization and settling. Then strain and heat the juice again.

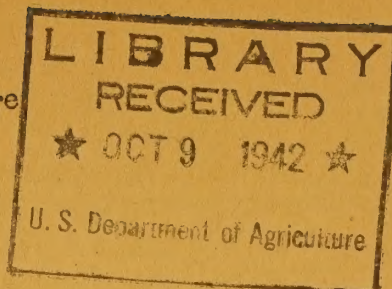
Wednesday - Apples: A Victory Food Special. Starting September 17 and lasting through the week of September 26, the U. S. Department of Agriculture has designated apples as the Victory Food Special. And this brings up the story of an American hero, a hero without medals. John Chapman, born near Springfield, Mass., around 1774, devoted his life to two things - his love of God and his fellowman, and his love for this country. It was his desire to see apple trees growing on every plot of ground. In his early manhood he took a trip with his brother to the Northwest. After that he settled near Pittsburgh on the banks of the Ohio River and

built a home and started a nursery. His home became a haven, as pioneers journeyed westward. When women and children got sick en route, he insisted that they stay at his house until they were well. No family left without saplings or apple seeds to start orchards when they built their new homes. Later Johnny decided this wasn't enough, so he traveled over the Northwest preaching the gospel and distributing apple seeds. He was known as Johnny Appleseed. Even the Indians revered him as a great mystic. He died in 1847. When the news of his death reached Washington, General Sam Houston, then serving in Congress, rose and said: "This old man was one of the most useful citizens of the world in his humble way. He has made a greater contribution to our civilization than we realize." Today one third of the world's acreage planted in apples is in the United States. Much of the credit is due to that old pioneer. This year we are going to have apples aplenty and that is why they have been listed as a Victory Food Special.

Thursday - Question Box. The first question today is "How can I keep milk on scalloped potatoes from curdling?" The answer: Use very fresh milk and keep the oven heat low when baking. Now a question on sweetpotatoes: "Is it possible to use corn sirup or honey in place of sugar in making candied sweetpotatoes?" Yes. Boil medium-sized sweetpotatoes in their skins. When they are tender, drain, peel, and cut in halves or slices. Put a layer of sweetpotatoes over the bottom of a greased baking pan. Dot with fat. Sprinkle with salt. Pour over this a cup of corn sirup or honey. Bake in a moderate oven. Or, to save heating the oven for one dish of sweetpotatoes cook them on top of the stove, over low heat, watching to keep sirup from scorching. Now a question about storing food: "What is the best way to store pumpkin and winter squash?" The bulletin, Home Storage of Vegetables (free, from the U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.) says: Pumpkins and squashes may be kept for winter use in the storage room in the basement or in dry, well-ventilated cellars, but a dry, aboveground, frostproof place is best. Set them in rows on shelves so they are not in contact with each other. Keep the temperature around 40° F. Another letter says, "Please tell me how to keep dried fruits and vegetables safely." Dried foods must be kept dry. Seal in moisture-proof containers, and store in a cool, dark, dry place. Examine occasionally. if you see signs of moisture, reheat to 165° F., and then reseal. Since dried foods are best if used a short time after opened, store in small quantities. A number of small bags may be filled, labeled, and placed in a lard can or small crock. Of course, the can or crock must be sealed. Now a question about the garden: Are coal and wood ashes good for garden soil? Coal ashes, screened, may be mixed thoroughly with heavy clay soils to make the soil lighter. It is not good as a fertilizer. Wood ashes from hardwood, such as oak or hickory, are of value as a fertilizer because they may contain as much as 7 percent potash and also a little lime.

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United States Department of Agriculture
EXTENSION SERVICE
Washington, D. C.



DIGEST OF HOMEMAKERS' CHATS

Week of September 21, 1942

(To be remimeographed for distribution to home demonstration agents)

Monday. - The Wartime Clothing Picture. Here are some tips from specialists of the Department and other Government agencies to help you with wartime clothing problems. First, in wartime your country's needs come first, and the family's wants and needs second. In time of war, money counts to your country, so all spending for clothes should be wise and careful. Fabrics are an essential war commodity along with labor, machines, and other things that go into the making of clothing. Shortages of material, the fact that much textile machinery has been diverted to producing war goods only, rising prices, substitutes, efforts to prevent further inflation, and shortages of labor at home and in industry are sure to bring about changes in the way you buy clothes, or in the way you use and care for them. There is ample raw cotton on hand in this country, but there has been a shortage of finished goods for civilians because looms have been weaving military goods, and because housewives have been buying indiscriminately. As for wool, there will be enough for essential needs, but civilians will find much of it blended with other fibers. Rayon is helping out a lot nowadays when there is a shortage of other fibers. Streamlining of styles also helps to make textiles go round. There won't be so many colors to choose from, and because many present solvents are critical materials, clothes will be dry cleaned mostly with petroleum solvents. No shortage of soap is foreseen. So the clothing picture is this - an adequate supply of needed goods, but not frills.

Tuesday. - Question Box. The first question is from a housewife who wants to know what kind of lunch to pack for a night worker. This requires consideration of the other meals of the day. Ordinarily a workingman's lunch, eaten at noon, needs to provide about a third of his total food for the day. But this night worker has a substantial dinner about 6 in the evening, works from 10 p.m. to 7 a.m., and eats breakfast with the family. So the lunch he carries needs only to round-out the requirements for a good day's normal needs. These are 2 to 3 cups of milk; 1 serving of food rich in vitamin C; 1 serving of leafy green or yellow vegetable; 2 other servings of vegetables and fruits; 1 egg; 1 serving of lean meat, poultry, or fish; or sometimes dried beans or peas; 2 servings of whole-grain products or enriched bread; some fats; and some sweets. Checked back with the breakfast and dinner menus, the lunch probably should have a pint of milk, a fruit or salad, more whole-grain bread, and something to eat with it - meat, fish, chicken, eggs, cheese, butter, or something sweet. Pack the lunch so that it looks appetizing.

Now, a letter asking how to cook the marrow in beef bone. Saw marrow bones in sections about 2 or 3 inches long. Cover each open end with flour and water dough and tie in a piece of cloth. Boil the pieces for an hour, remove cloth and dough and serve the sections of marrow bone hot on pieces of crisp toast. Another way is to slice the marrow, sprinkle with salt, pepper and flour, and fry slowly to a delicate brown. A third letter asks for suggestions on making milk desserts, using evaporated milk and not much

sugar. Evaporated milk, after it is diluted with an equal quantity of water, can be used in almost any way that fresh milk can. You can substitute honey, maple sirup, molasses, sorghum, or cane sirup for sugar in making most ordinary milk puddings and desserts. The last question is: "How can I get rid of boxelder bugs that have come into the house?" Use a fly spray that contains pyrethrum. When the insects are temporarily paralyzed by the spray, sweep them up and burn them or put them in a pail of oily water.

Wednesday. - Cabbage - Victory Special. The Department of Agriculture has just announced that cabbage will be the Victory Food Special in 28 of the North Central and Eastern Seaboard States during the period of September 28 through October 10. The supply of cabbage will be particularly heavy in this area during this time, but consumers throughout the Nation are asked to eat more cabbage. Cabbage is grown in almost every State of the Union today, and over most of the world. The kind found on most markets now is known as the Domestic type which does not store well, so must be used in season. It contains a high percentage of minerals and vitamins and when properly prepared is one of the most wholesome foods. In addition to this, it is one of the lowest priced vegetables on the market. So let's plan a few extra dishes for the family using cabbage during the time mentioned.

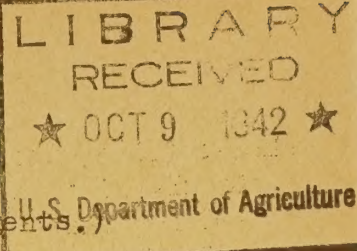
Thursday. - Question Box. The first question today is "How to dig, store, and use horseradish?" Don't harvest it until October. Three or four days before digging the roots, cut off the tops as close to the ground as possible. Put the roots in cold storage, store them in pits with other vegetables, or in the barn or cellar. Don't expose to light. Save rootlets about the size of a pencil, tie them in bundles and store in a box of damp sand in the cellar, if you want to grow horseradish again next year. To prepare it for the table, peel or scrape the roots, then grate directly into white-wine vinegar or distilled vinegar of 4 1/2 to 5 percent strength. Don't use cider vinegar as it will turn the horseradish dark. This bottled horseradish will keep a few weeks, but don't prepare too much at one time. Or you can dry it, grind to a powder, and put up in bottles in dry form. Add a little to tomato catchup and serve with crab, shrimp, clams, or oysters, or serve the horseradish plain with raw shellfish or any kind fish, pot roast or baked ham. Make it into a cream salad dressing or sour-cream sauce.

The next question asks the relative value of orange, tomato, grapefruit, and pineapple juice. Nutritionists say that the first three are very high in vitamin C content and provide more of this vitamin than canned pineapple or pineapple juice. About two-thirds of a cup of orange or grapefruit juice provides all the vitamin C needed for an adult for 1 day. The same quantity of tomato juice provides about half the daily requirement of the vitamin.

Now a question from a woman, moving from her country place into the city for the winter months, who wants to leave part of her canned goods in the farm house. "How can I keep my canned foods from freezing. They are all in glass." Wrap each jar in newspaper and pack in sawdust or excelsior. Keep the barrel or box where you store the jars in a sunny room on the first or second floor, not in the cellar.

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DIGEST OF HOMEMAKERS' CHATS
Week of September 28, 1942



(To be remimeographed for distribution to home demonstration agents.)

Monday - Fall food notes. The turkey crop this year is a little larger than that for 1941, but the consumer demand is greater, and prices are higher. Wholesale prices of dressed tom turkeys in New York early in September were 36 percent higher than a year ago, and dressed hens were up 33 percent. Live hens were up 41 percent. At Chicago, dressed old toms were up 50 percent and dressed old hens, 37 percent. Since the price is higher this year, you will want to make the most of the turkey you have by cooking it to perfection. You will find directions in a free bulletin entitled "Poultry Cooking," No. 1888, published by the U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.

And now about cranberries. From indications, the crop this fall will be the third largest on record, probably well over 756 thousand barrels. And these fall foods bring to mind nuts. Because nuts are hearty concentrated food containing both fat and protein, they're coming into the picture for meatless meals instead of just for extras. Only four tree nuts are cultivated in this country in large-enough quantities to make them important commercially - English walnuts, pecans, almonds, and filberts. There will be a large crop of all these on the market.

Tuesday. - Question box. The questions today are from home gardeners. One asks "What shall I do for my garden this fall to put it in best condition for planting next spring?" Where the ground stays frozen during winter months you can improve the garden by plowing and turning under stable manure this fall. Fall plowing is helpful for heavy soil, but a sandy soil should be covered with manure and mulch or sown to green manure. In the North, winter rye is good for this. In the South, a cover crop planted in the fall is important for holding the soil from leaching and erosion as well as for fertilizing. The second question: "I am building a compost pile and wonder if I may not be saving and spreading pests and plant diseases." Garden advisers say almost any source of humus that does not show definite signs of disease is good material for the compost pile. It takes about a year for this to decompose enough for use, and during that time most of the weed seeds, insects, or plant diseases will die out. The third question is about using sawdust as a mulch. Sawdust works all right as a mulch over the top of the ground to conserve moisture and keep down weeds, but has no fertilizing value, and when mixed with the soil tends to take away plant nourishment. Now for the last question: "Which garden vegetables can I plant in the fall that won't be injured by light frosts?" Many of the leafy vegetables such as chard, Chinese cabbage, collards, kale, endive, spinach, mustard and turnip greens, and leaf lettuce are ideal for this.

Wednesday - Substitute fibers and fabrics. We are in for a lot of substitutes, and some of them may not be quite satisfactory, others may be lucky finds and become permanent fixtures in our lives. Many of us will return to simpler, sturdier clothes, and durable rather than sheer hose. In 1939, nearly all of the 43 million dozen pairs of women's full-fashioned hose made in this country were of silk. In 1941, 73 percent were of all silk and part silk, and 22 percent of nylon and part nylon. Today practically all of the full-fashioned hosiery knitting machines now in production are making rayon or cotton stockings. Manufacturers had to turn to cotton, since silk imports are cut off and

almost all of the nylon is needed for military purposes. But the country is seriously limited on spinning machines to make the high-count cotton yarns needed for sheer hosiery and fine cotton fabrics. So the stockings are made of only the coarser yarns just now. For sheerness the manufacturers turned to rayon, which is not so satisfactory for hosiery as silk, but attempts are being made to improve it. Tests on other clothing show that rayon fibers are not so durable as cotton. Some manufacturers are beginning to advertise and label their present output as "duration" merchandise and give detailed information on how its composition differs from that of their regular lines and the performance to be expected. You can get free leaflets on care and repair of clothes and a new bulletin "Stain Removal from Fabrics," No. 1474, by writing a post card to the U. S. Department of Agriculture for them.

Thursday - Question box. One housewife this week asks how to re-cover an old umbrella. Take the old cover off carefully and use it as a pattern for cutting. It takes 1 yard of 39-inch plain material to cover an ordinary umbrella. If you want pictures of just how to sew and put on the new cover, write to the Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C., for the leaflet on recovering an umbrella.

The next question: "Is there any way of cooking eggplant besides frying it in slices?" You can scallop it or stuff it. For scalloping, melt 2 tablespoons of fat in a skillet, add chopped green pepper and onion, cook a few minutes, then add tomatoes, eggplant cut in small pieces, seasoning, and cook for 10 minutes. Place the mixture in a shallow greased baking dish and sprinkle buttered bread crumbs over it. Bake in moderate oven for 15 minutes. To stuff eggplant, scoop out the flesh, cook for 10 minutes in water, add a cup of cooked vegetables, chopped onion and seasoning. Stuff the shells with this and cover the top with crumbs. Bake in moderate oven for 15 or 20 minutes.

Now a question about pie: "Could I use sirup instead of sugar in sweetpotato pie and also in pumpkin and squash pie?" Yes, make the pie by your regular recipe except for substituting sirup for sugar. If honey, maple, or cane sirup is used, the pie will be as sweet as when made with sugar. Since these pies contain eggs they are useful in rounding out meatless meals.